



Tips for vulnerable people living alone/self-isolating

The outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) may cause additional challenges for older people who may already be vulnerable and particularly those who struggle with health conditions, loneliness, and isolation.

Have a good support network:

- Keep a list of contacts of family, friends and neighbours by your phone so you can reach them if you need to.
- Leave a set of keys with a neighbour you trust.
- Talk to family, friends and neighbours regularly.
- If you and your loved one have a computer, smart phone or tablet, consider using a video calling programme such as Skype or social media to stay in touch with people.
- Contact the Alzheimer National Helpline team on **1800 341 341**, via email at helpline@alzheimer.ie or via Live Chat at www.alzheimer.ie who are available to offer practical information and emotional support about dementia. We can also give you tips if you find it difficult to follow the HSE advice about coronavirus. We cannot however offer personalised medical advice. But we will direct you towards reliable sources.
- Alone have launched a national support line for older people in collaboration with the HSE and the Department of Health. The helpline is open Monday-Friday 8am-8pm by calling **0818 222 024**. As the situation develops, Alone is looking at how it can work collaboratively to ensure older people will have access to food, medication, fuel, daily contact, and any other support that may be needed.

Ask for help and support where necessary and appropriate:

- Ask family, friends or neighbours to do a food shop such as staples and foods with a long shelf life.
- Contact pharmacies about medication and getting supplies of medication in for a period of time
- If you have concerns about your health during this time, contact your GP or in the event of an emergency do not hesitate to contact 112 or 999
- Check www.HSE.ie for your health centre number if you need to contact your local public health nurse or from HSE information line at 1850 241 850 (Lines may be busy)

Look after yourself:

- Keep stocked up on basic food. Consider cooking extra portions of dinner that you can freeze for another meal. Tinned and frozen foods are other healthy options to keep in stock.
- Organise your day and write down daily to do lists and activities to do throughout the day such as reading, gardening, cooking, phoning friends and family
- Walk around the house regularly.
- If you have difficulty walking or moving your arms and legs, wiggle your fingers and toes while sitting.
- Have hot drinks throughout the day and one before bedtime.
- Check home heating supply – enough logs, coal or check level of oil in oil tank
- Avoid staying still for too long. Exercise and regular movement will maintain fitness and strength.
- Eat and drink healthily with plenty of fruit, vegetables and water, to help boost your immune system and energy levels.

Stay informed: keep up to date on latest Covid-19 information on www.hse.ie